



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240

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The Honorable Tom Tiffany  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Enclosed are responses to the Questions for the Record submitted to the Department of the Interior's witness, Michael Reynolds, Deputy Director, National Park Service, following his appearance at the September 19, 2023, legislative hearing before your subcommittee. These responses were prepared by the National Park Service.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond to you on these matters.

Sincerely,

Christopher P. Salotti  
Legislative Counsel  
Office of Congressional and  
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Joe Neguse  
Ranking Member

**Questions for the Record  
Committee on Natural Resources  
Subcommittee on Federal Lands  
Legislative Hearing on HR 3107, HR 3200 and HR 4984  
September 19, 2023**

**Questions from Rep. Tiffany**

- 1. During the hearing, you mentioned the National Park Service (NPS) coordinates with local, county, and state governments (“stakeholders”) based on civic engagement policies and have definitions of communication and coordination in policy manuals.**
  - a. How does the NPS define coordination?**
  - b. Will you provide citations for laws, statutes, codes, regulations, and policy manuals directing the NPS to coordinate with stakeholders?**

**Response to a and b:**

The principles of state and local government, stakeholder, and public engagement are foundational to our management of the National Park System and the implementation of NPS programs. These principles are reflected throughout NPS and Departmental policy documents, as well as in applicable statutes and regulations. For example, page 2 of NPS *Management Policies* (2006) lists the guiding principles that underlie our policies. It states that the policies must “...emphasize consultation and cooperation with local/state/tribal/federal entities” and “reflect NPS goals and a commitment to cooperative conservation and civic engagement.” The NPS policy on civic engagement is stated on page 14.

The most relevant guidance document for NPS employees is Director’s Order #75A: Civic Engagement and Public Involvement. This document articulates the NPS’s commitment to engaging with the public and partners through our policies and provides standards on how to carry out civic engagement. It also serves as the foundation for integrating guidance on public involvement activities in other Director’s Orders. This principle is also found in Chapter 2 (Public Participation in Decision-making) of part 301 of the Departmental Manual (301 DM 2), which provides specific guidelines to ensure a consistent framework for offering the public meaningful opportunities for participation in decision-making processes that affect or interest them.

Providing opportunities for stakeholder and public input is part of the Federal rulemaking process and is required by law and Departmental policy. The Administrative Procedure Act requires federal agencies to publish notice of proposed rules in the Federal Register and to provide the public with an opportunity to participate in the rulemaking process through the submission of comments (5 U.S.C. § 553). The Departmental Handbook “How to Prepare Regulations and Federal Register Notices” requires bureaus to facilitate full public participation in developing rules and to allow at least 60 days for public comments on proposed rules (318 DM Handbook, Chapter 5). Many of the laws under which the NPS operates, such as the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, require the NPS to consult with stakeholders. NPS hunting and fishing regulations require NPS to consult with appropriate state agencies before restricting or closing areas to hunting, trapping, or fishing (36 CFR §§ 2.2(c) and 2.3(c)).